

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Final Office action of September 7, 2004, the examiner allowed claims 1-21 and 24-26, and rejected claims 22 and 23 as anticipated by Bradley et al. (USPN 5,396,572).

Applicants appreciate the time and consideration provided by Examiner in reviewing this application, however, respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 22-23 at least for the following reasons.

Claim Rejections -35 U.S.C.§102(b)

Anticipation under 35 U.S.C. §102 requires that each and every claimed feature be disclosed by a single prior art reference.

Bradley et al. merely teach a final product of an optical connector for an optical cord.

The rejected claims 22 and 23, however, are directed not to a connector plug itself but to an *assembling tool* for positioning and fixing each element of a connector plug, such as a ferrule, an optical cord and an optical cord fixing member to each other. Applicants amended claims 22 and 23 to further clarify the subject matter of the invention. In making these revisions care has been taken to ensure that no new matter has been introduced. The amendments are supported by the specification, for example, page 34, lines 5-13; page 57, line 21 to page 60, line 6.

In other words, the invention as recited in amended claims 22 and 23 includes significant features:

(i) positioning means for holding said optical cord fixing member holding means and said ferrule holding means, and further for adjusting a position of said ferrule holding means relative to said optical cord fixing member holding means in back and forth directions"; and

(ii) the optical cord fixing member holding means and ferrule holding means are configured to fix the optical cord, the ferrule and the optical cord fixing member to each other, which are thereafter removable from each of said holding means.

Further, claim 23 includes step (iii) claiming that "rearward slide of the optical cord fixing member holding means moves the fixing member to allow it to be positioned".

Bradley et al. fail to teach any one of the above stated features (i) through (iii) of claims 22 and 23.

The Examiner states that a strain-relief boot 190 of Bradley corresponds to optical cord fixing member holding means of claims 22 and 23, and cap 150 of Bradley corresponds to ferrule holding means of claims 22 and 23, respectively. However, strain-relief boot 190 and cap 150 of Bradley are not adapted to be adjustable in back and forth directions.

Consequently, Applicants respectfully submit that Bradley fail to disclose such means as claimed in claims 22 and 23, namely, "positioning means for holding said optical cord fixing

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member holding means and said ferrule holding means and further adjusting a position of said ferrule holding means relative to said optical cord fixing member holding means in back and forth directions”.

Further, in Bradley, strain-relief boot 190 is not adapted to slide rearward to move sleeve 160 which corresponds to the optical cord fixing member of the present invention, thereby achieving a positioning of sleeve 160. That is, Bradley et al. fail to teach the above stated feature (iii).

Bradley further fail to disclose such limitations of claims 22 and 23 as that the optical cord fixed to the ferrule is removable from both of strain-relief boot 190 and cap 150 in a state where cap 150 corresponding to optical cord fixing member holding means and strain-relief boot 190 corresponding to ferrule holding means are relatively positioned, i.e., in a state where the both members 190 and 150 are connected to each other.

As mentioned above, Bradley et al. neither disclose nor suggest an assembling tool with holding members adjustable to provide a fixing position for each of the optical cord, the ferrule and the optical cord fixing member to each other; and that, after the positioning and fixing of each member, the members are removable from the holding members of the assembling tool.

Since Bradley et al. do not teach an assembling tool as claimed in claims 22 and 23 of the present invention, Applicants respectfully submit that all the pending claims as previously presented and claims 22 and 23 as currently amended, are novel and allowable in view of the cited prior art. The application is now in condition for allowance, which allowance is earnestly solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required in this application under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16-1.17 during its entire pendency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 06-1135. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 06-1135.

Respectfully submitted,
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